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Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 01578 140937Z

12
ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 SAM-01 /094 W
---------- 063492
R 140910Z AUG 74
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE 6004
INFO AMEMBASSY
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, IS, JO
SUBJ: PERES SUPPORTS ETZION BLOC, SAYS SAMARIA SETTLEMENT MUST WAIT

1. DURING VISIT TO WEST BANK AUG 13, ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, ACCORDING TO AUG 14 JERUSALEM POST, TOLD SETTLERS AT ETZION BLOC THAT POLITICAL FUTURE OF BLOC "IS BEYOND DOUBT". NOTING THAT AREA BETWEEN BETHLEHEM AND HEBRON WAS FIRST SETTLED BY JEWS IN THIRTIES, AND THE ETZION BLOC SETTLEMENTS (FROM WHICH JEWS WERE EVICTED IN BITTER BATTLE IN 1948) NOW FLOURISHING, PERES REPORTEDLY INDICATED THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF THEIR FUTURE STANDING. WHILE REPORTEDLY STATING HE PERSONALLY FAVORED SETTLEMENT AT MAHAME YOSEF, NORTHEAST OF NABLUS ON HEIGHTS ABOVE JORDAN VALLEY, PERES IS QUOTED AS SAYING SETTLEMENT IN "SAMARIA" MUST WAIT. HE OPPOSED AD HOC SETTLEMENT AT EXPENSE OF LOCAL POPULATION. HE LISTED GOI PRIORITIES FOR SETTLEMENT AS JORDAN VALLEY, RAFAH APPROACHES, GOLAN HEIGHTS AND JERUSALEM AREA.
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 01578 140937Z

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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2. PERES ALSO VISITED NABLUS, WHERE PRESS INDICATES HE DISCUSSED NUMBER OF PROBLEMS WITH MAYOR HAJ MA-AZOUZ AL-MASRI, INCLUDING LOCAL RESIDENTS' CONCERN OVER ATTEMPT SETTLEMENT AT SEBASTIA AND PROLONGED DETENTION OF NABULSIS ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF INVOLV-EMENT IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND GOI LOAN FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

3. COMMENT: FOURTH SETTLEMENT IN ETZION BLOC, FOR WHICH PLANS ANNOUNCED LAST MARCH, IS NOW UNDER CONSTRCTUION. GIVEN ITS HISTORY, WE BELIEVE THERE VIRTUALLY NO POSSIBILITY THAT ISRAEL WOULD CONSIDER RELINGQUISHING CONTROL OVER THIS AREA, WHICH ONLY ABOUT 3 KMS FROM WEST BANK BORDER WITH ISRAEL, TO WHICH IT HAS BEEN CONNECTED BY NEW, WIDE HIGHWAY.
JONES

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Review Event:
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